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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 000362

SIPDIS

PASS TO S -- CHERYL MILLS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [RU](#)  
SUBJECT: RUSSIANS PROPOSE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL COUNCIL MEETING  
ON MIDDLE EAST

Classified By: Ambassador Susan E. Rice, for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[¶1.](#) (U) This contains an action request; see paragraph 4.

[¶2.](#) (C) Russian PermRep Churkin told Ambassador Rice on April 6 that Russia would like to hold a ministerial-level Security Council meeting on the Middle East during its Council presidency in May. Churkin said Russian FM Lavrov will be in Washington on May 7, and the Russians propose holding the Security Council's monthly Middle East meeting on May 11, with Lavrov chairing. The Russians would like the Secretary to attend. The aim of the the meeting would be to keep attention focused on the peace process and help keep it on track. Churkin said that while this meeting could be a prelude to the Moscow meeting, it does not have to be. He also noted the meeting as a possible opportunity to get Quartet Envoy Tony Blair to brief the Council. Churkin did not discuss whether the Russians envision some sort of outcome product from the meeting.

[¶3.](#) (C) Churkin also said that Russia hopes to discuss Afghanistan in the Council in some way during its Presidency by focusing on the regional dimension, including Pakistan, and on the role of regional organizations such as NATO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. (Note: Afghanistan is not on the Security Council schedule for May. End Note.)

[¶4.](#) (C) Action request: USUN requests the Department to advise as soon as possible our views on and whether the Secretary would attend the proposed Middle East Ministerial meeting May 11.

Rice